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The Visit to Costa Rica

OF

His Excellency The Secretary of State of the United States of America

PHILANDER C. KNOX

EDITORIAL

From "La Gaceta," Official Journal, San Jose, Costa Rica
March 5, 1912

LEGACION DE COSTA RICA
WASHINGTON, D. C.

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HIS EXCELLENCY PHILANDER C. KNOX, Secretary of State of the United States of America, has been the guest of honor of Costa Rica for four days. He has brought to this Republic a message of peace and friendship in behalf of the people and Government of the great Republic of North America, and it is exceedingly gratifying to state that in the fulfillment of his pleasant mission he has shown himself to be not only a courteous and refined gentleman, but also an eloquent orator, an accomplished diplomat and eminent statesman.

The Government of Costa Rica, faithfully voicing the sentiments of the Costa Rican people, took special pains in rendering as pleasant as possible the short stay in San José of such a distinguished visitor. The people also expressed its acknowledgment and gratitude for the great honor done us by his visit, and thereby fully reciprocated the sentiments of international friendship so earnestly shown by the distinguished visitor.

To this end the Government directed that the expressions of good understanding and cordial relations between the greatest and the smallest of the American Republics should not be limited to the usual ceremonies of presentation of credentials, but that they should really be a sincere token of the social world of Costa Rica.

A ball in honor of His Excellency the Secretary of State and his distinguished wife, and a banquet given in their honor by the President of the Republic, constituted the most conspicuous features of the expressions of joy because of said good understanding and cordial friendship. The two social functions were entirely successful, both for

the large attendance of prominent people and for the sumptuousness displayed in them. The genteel women of the capital who attended the ball, in the superb coliseum, again gave evidence of the high degree of culture of the Costa Ricans, and the speeches made at the banquet bore witness of the cordial friendship which exists between the two countries.

TOAST OF PRESIDENT RICARDO JIMENEZ

You are welcome to Costa Rica, distinguished Representative of the United States of America, that friendly country that from remote times and in a variety of ways has exercised such a far-reaching influence over the destinies of this Republic.

A little time after the thirteen colonies, according to the terms of your Declaration of Independence, "Assumed, among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them," the Spanish colonies, stirred up by the revolutionary fermentation of the North and encouraged by your noble example, repeated and made good your words, applying them to themselves, declaring that "They were and of right ought to be, free and independent States," and so it was, Sir, that Costa Rica, without hatred toward, and even without disaffection for Spain, and carried along by the wave of emancipation that swept over the New World from Massachusetts to the Argentine, abandoned her secular vassalage and assumed the sovereign arbitration of her destiny.

Nevertheless it was very possible, above all in Central America, that our exercise of sovereignty would only have been a momentary eclipse of European domination, of this or that State, if it had not been for the joint Anglo-American action, and if the United States had not pronounced in 1823, through the mouth of President Monroe, its formidable veto. The American Eagle then spread its wings over this continent, and in its flight joined that of the "Nopal" and the Condors of the South. And from that epoch the schemes of conquest or re-conquest of the ancient colonies

were consigned to the dominions of the things past and gone for ever.

But there is another benefit that we owe to your country, the greatest of all, that without which all others would be mere dross. We have cast our institutions in the moulding-sand of yours. In our first attempts in the exercise of self-government—the only one that deserves the decorous respect of men—we learned to spell in your famous document of Declaration of Independence that, "All men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness;" and consistent with these fundamental principles, as incontrovertible now at the beginning of the 20th century as they were at the end of the 18th, we regulated our political system, and within that system, the smallest Republic of this hemisphere lives happily, "Without envying others or being envied by them," in the same manner as your wonderful country enjoying all the privileges of that same system also lives contentedly, an actual demonstration of the fact that self-government, with powers distributed and limited, with liberty of speech and a free press, of effective and extensive individual rights; a government that derives its just powers from the consent of the governed, is beneficent everywhere—at least in America—with that same universality of the mathematical laws, that are equally appropriate for fixing the course of the planets as they are for arranging the most humble transactions of men.

I hope, Sir, that the personal knowledge of our institutions and customs may excite in you a feeling of true pride and pleasure, on seeing many of the seeds of good government bearing fruit in this little corner of America, snatched from your fields of liberty by the winds that carry civilization from country to country, and dropped by them here and there in all parts of the world.

"There will be perpetual peace between the United States and the Republic of Costa Rica!" these were the pro-

phetic words of Daniel Webster, stamped on the treaty of 1851 which bears his signature. Consecrated by the lapse of time the things that have happened since then have confirmed this prophecy. Our mutual relations of countrymen with countrymen have grown steadily. We sell in the markets of the United States 60 per cent of our exportations and, in exchange, we buy in them 60 per cent of the articles that Costa Rica imports. This present condition of reciprocity is an excellent sign that foretells the firmness of our future relations.

In negotiating, we enter into mutual relations with others, and to have intercourse with others is to be known, to be appreciated and to consolidate friendships. Attracted by the fertility of our soils and the riches of our mines, and I presume, attracted also by our peacefulness and by the respect and regard we show to foreigners, their properties and creeds, you will find here a great number of your fellow countrymen managing large capitals of their own or of persons who reside in the United States. Far from frowning upon their good luck, we are pleased to see it, and as their gains are not derived through legislative favors, their prosperity does not diminish, but on the contrary, helps to augment vigorously the prosperity of the nation.

Lastly, Mr. Secretary, it is not possible to pass over in silence that share which, through our own initiative and confident acts, your country has taken in the demarkation of the territory of this Republic. An American hand, the just hand of Mr. Cleveland, of blessed memory, marked our boundaries on the north; and another hand, the hand of Mr. White, in which now hangs, happily for you and also for us, the scales of justice, will trace our southern frontier. In the arrangement that Costa Rica and Panama made to this effect you put, out of consideration to both parties, the valuable contingent of your skill, your benevolence and friendly interest, and I am delighted to be able to take advantage of this occasion to express to you by word of mouth the profound

gratitude that from that time we Costa Ricans owe to you, a gratitude that expands now that we find ourselves honored with your visit. And I am confident that this advent of yours will leave in us a wake of fellow-feeling, not like that made by the furrow that the ship forms in the waters, to be destroyed by them immediately afterward, but a wake as wide and luminous as it is permanent.

Based on these antecedents is inspired the cordiality with which I drink your health, Mr. Secretary, and also that of President Taft, and in the same way the health of the people of the United States, and as that great country does not now see in any quarter a cloud that may darken the splendor of its power, I hope that it may never see the refulgent sun of justice eclipsed on its horizon, so that its greatness and moderation, without losing their force for a moment may likewise continue shining over the world until the end of time.

To your health, Mr. Secretary.

THE RESPONSE OF SECRETARY KNOX

Mr. President and Gentlemen:

It is indeed a pleasure for me, Mr. President, to acknowledge how deeply I appreciate the generous sentiment you have proposed and the honor you do me and through me the American people by showering upon me your bounteous and cordial hospitality, thereby evincing your sympathetic response to the spirit which has inspired my mission to you. I know that I am acknowledging no feigned friendship or simulated courtesy, but that the great heart of Costa Rica has responded to the heart of her most northern sister republic. The similarity of our political organizations, our geographical proximity, the tendency of our commercial and industrial interests and policies and our traditional and long continued relations of friendship and good will inspired in the President of the United States the sincere desire that our sympathies, cooperation and good understanding should increase and for that reason he directed me to visit the Republic of Costa Rica and our other sister republics in the region of the Caribbean Sea in order that I might carry to them a message of good will from the people and Government of the United States, and further that I might make that personal acquaintance with your public men and hospital peoples to the end that such direct personal knowledge and understanding and appreciation might result in mutual advantage and cooperation for the advancement of our common interests.

It was with a feeling of genuine wonder and admiration that I arrived at your Capital City after the marvelous ride from the Coast, along the wonderful Reventazon, following its tortuous and difficult windings, through the most beautiful tropical foliage until arriving at the highlands the

verdure of the temperate zone at once met the eye. The ability to make this journey in so much comfort was, Mr. President, a suggestion of what the Costa Ricans have accomplished along other lines and fully prepared me for the abundant evidences of the industry, thrift, tenacity and culture of your people, which I met at every hand.

It is with a feeling of gratified expectancy that one finds at every turn expressions of the traditional love of your people for education, not only in its practical forms, but for the higher arts, notably architecture and music, and to see in the happy and radiant faces of the children the reflection of the beauty of their mothers and sturdy qualities of their fathers.

It is given to few countries to make the just boast that within her borders the school teachers outnumber the soldiers and that resting upon her bosom in the very center of America is the first perfect type of an International Court of Arbitral Justice.

The attitude of the Government of the United States toward the peaceful settlement of international disputes, of which his court forms a model, has been consistently maintained since the foundation of our Government, as is evidenced by the treaty of Ghent. The attitude of the Republic of Costa Rica has likewise been consistent and is amply evidenced by the course adopted for the settlement of the century old boundary dispute with Panama. I repeat, Mr. President, that the people of Costa Rica may justly felicitate themselves that in their very midst is the home of the Central American Court of Justice, the one tribunal before which one nation may bring another, yes, before which an individual may bring a nation to determine before the bar of impartial justice the differences that exist between them. My Government, and I am sure the government of Mexico, feel proud of the part played by them in the Central American Peace Conference, convoked under their auspices, out of which grew this International Forum, which is the proto-

type of the court it has long been the desire of the United States to see established by the nations of the earth. In this connection, Mr. President, let me express the feeling of profound satisfaction that the people and Government of the United States entertain, not only because of the rapidly increasing prosperity of Costa Rica, but because of her love for peace, because of the respect she inspires in the family of nations, because she has laid the foundations of perpetual freedom upon the eternal rock of justice and occupies an exceptional and enviable position among the American Republics due to the general distribution of property among her people, and because of the constantly increasing intimacy and friendliness between her people and our own.

It is but a short time, Mr. President, until at Panama a new highway of commerce will be opened to the world. That event, so conspicuous and significant, will remove the countries of the Caribbean Sea from their comparative isolation and place them upon the greatest commercial highway on the globe, a highway from the Northern to the Southern, from the Western to the Eastern world. The republics of this hemisphere will be thrown into a new day and a new condition. It would be folly to enter that new day without a proper conception of its opportunities and possibilities for our common good. We should go into the new epoch as befits it, with new aspirations and enthusiasms and with greater promise. The casual relations which once marked our intercourse are now happily not casual, but they must be closer and more friendly still, so close indeed that as we labor to better human conditions this common end will be a bond of trust and hope.

I bear to you then, not only a message of good will but one bespeaking a mutual understanding and union in aspiration and effort toward furthering the progress of the western world through deeds of reciprocal helpfulness.

The free and equal republics which have established themselves upon this hemisphere have a singular harmony

of destiny, and that is, to bring their common form of government to the highest point of efficiency for the maintenance of popular rights. The greatest strength of these republics whose heritage is so wonderful lies in unity of aim and effort.

While we will all be more or less in the future as in the past engrossed in questions affecting our internal development and our own acute problems, it is wise to seize every opportunity to impress upon the world and upon ourselves that ours is a Pan-American Union of lofty Pan-American public opinion doing justice and exacting justice, disclaiming ignoble suspicion and putting to scorn international acts of unworthiness when unhappily they may be found among us.

Gentlemen, I propose the health, the happiness and the prosperity of the President and people of Costa Rica.

* * * *

The enthusiastic applause with which both addresses were received surely will reverberate with a sympathetic echo throughout the entire country, since said applause represents the vehement desire of the Costa Ricans to live for the noble purpose of enjoying all the great blessings of liberty by means of peace and industry.

The visit of the illustrious Secretary of State of the United States of America, his distinguished wife and select party, then, has come to an end, leaving in Costa Rica the most pleasant impressions and undying memories. At Puntarenas he left the Costa Rican shores in order to continue in other Central American republics his praiseworthy mission. May his voyage be pleasant, and may he be an earnest of peace among us!

* * * *

Secretary Knox landed at Port Limon, on the Atlantic, March 1, 1912, and proceeded to San Jose the same day, where he remained until March 4th, when he left for Puntarenas, on the Pacific. From that port he addressed the following telegram:

"His Excellency the President of Costa Rica, San Jose:

"Upon departing from the hospitable shores of Costa Rica permit me heartily and profoundly to thank you for the cordial and generous hospitality shown me and my family during our stay in your beautiful country. I shall always look back with the most inspiring recollection of my unprecedented welcome here.

"(Signed) P. C. KNOX."

APR 3 1912